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MEMORANDUM FOR: Director of Central Intelligence

SUBJECT: OXCART Program Matters

1. This memorandum requires action on the part of the DCI.
2. Attached, Attachment A, are two Deputy Secretary of Defense working papers regarding OXCART together with a note from Dr. Flax forwarded to Mr. John Bross Friday evening, 23 June. A telephone call from Dr. Flax alerted Mr. Bross that the papers were being couriered to CIA and he requested week-end coordination. These papers were given to the DD/S&T shortly after receipt and were shown to the DDCI on Saturday morning. Admiral Taylor telephoned Dr. Flax's Office Saturday morning and talked with a Special Assistant there in the absence of Dr. Flax and left a message with him for Flax to the effect that he did not choose to bother Mr. Helms with this matter over the weekend. Further that at first glance he does not concur in the matter and that he proposed to recommend to the DCI that he non-concur. The DOD working papers propose the phase out of OXCART no later than January 1968 and the transfer of the Kadena responsibility to the SR-71 program on 1 December 1968¹. Dr. Flax's note affixed to the papers comments to the effect that his recommendation to Mr. Vance, which was not accepted, involved substantial delay in initiating phase out actions of OXCART, but that the proposed course of action in the working papers is a viable one to insure the OXCART capability to continue the deployed activity through 1 December 1967.

3. For your information, OSA/DD/S&T received a bootlegged copy of a memorandum sent by Dr. Flax to Mr. Vance on 16 June 1967. Attachment B, regarding OXCART wherein he deemed it prudent to properly preserve the OXCART Kadena deployment capability and to recommend a plan to retain all nine OXCART aircraft until the end of December, but with a decision point option in October 1967 to begin earlier phase out of some OXCART aircraft when the SR-71 capability is verified. This would add [] to the original phase out plan cost of

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OSD REVIEW

TOP SECRET

TOP SECRET

Page 2

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[redacted] One of the two DOD working papers alluded to indefinite continuation of OXCART (in FY 68) and that it would cost about [redacted] OSA/DD/S&T's submission to Dr. Flax forecast direct costs of [redacted]

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[redacted] (for a full program in FY 68) and in his paper to Mr. Vance, Dr. Flax added an additional [redacted] cost to our number for fuel and photo film and processing. The escalation of these numbers to [redacted] in the DOD working paper is not understood here.

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4. As a matter of interest on another matter relating to OXCART, on 24 June Mr. Lawrence Houston, the Agency Saturday duty officer, received a telephone call from Mr. Vance stating that after discussing with Mr. McNamara the matter of possible use of OXCART in the Middle East, nothing further would be done pending additional review. Dr. Flax sought Mr. Vance's reaction concerning an Agency/USAF team survey trip to [redacted] to look at bases for possible use there. The survey team was scheduled to depart on 23 June 1967 in a KC-135 tanker but was held up by Dr. Flax pending Mr. Vance's consultation with Mr. McNamara. In view of Mr. Vance's action noted above, the survey trip was called off for the time being. OSA/DD/S&T, meanwhile, is continuing to prepare contingency plans for OXCART use in the Middle East.

CARL E. DUCKETT

Deputy Director

for

Science and Technology

Attachments

As noted

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